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THE HAMADRYAD AND HER KINSFOLK.

The fair humanities of old religion,
The power, the beauty, and the majesty,
That had their haunt in dale, or piny mountain,
Or forest by slow stream, or pebbly spring,
Or chasm and wat'ry depths; all these have vanished;
They live no longer in the faith of reason!
But still the heart doth need a language; still
Doth the old instinct bring back the old names.

—*Schiller's Wallenstein, Tr. by Coleridge.*

THE children of the forest need no inspired poet to reveal for them the life that stirs and murmurs wherever they turn. Not only the owl and owlet, the squirrel and the rabbit, speak in a language Hiawatha is eager to master. The lapping water before the cabin door, the whispering pine tree, the far-off peak with ever-changing hood of clouds, are no less his fellow-creatures. This companionship is not evolved by a conscious effort of the imagination. Rather is it essential to our first impressions of this world. The pity is, that we ever unlearn a truth so potent: that this feeling of close sympathy, of life shared in common by all nature's offspring, should ever fade into the light of common day. Through all our life Baloo and Chibiabos should dwell with us, or we should return to them.

Almost any half-bred hound will meet certain death for his master's sake. What greater love hath any man? No gallant rider like John Brent will let us question the devoted affection between him and his horse. Nursemaids forget their charges, but the elephant nurse, never. Even Bianca and Lobo, the lame tiger and the red dog, are but the dearest foes of the man-child, to be fought fairly, and slain not without a half-regret, with due record of their valor. The gratitude of the sturdy tree, the forgiveness of the crushed violet, shame the thankless heart of man. Through all the long chain of forms, from the worm or the lichen up to our-

selves, a certain consciousness of kin should clasp every link. Coleridge and Wordsworth, and nearly all our poets since, never weary of emphasizing this innate sympathy between Man and Nature. However difficult to defend and analyze in cold logical prose, every Platonist, at least, *knows* that such a faith helps us toward that unquestioning conviction of harmony and simple unity pervading the universe which is the goal of all self-culture.

Doubtless the savage grown-up holds, better than we, to the cruder material side of this childlike faith. Even his gods, indeed, often take gross bestial shapes, not to mention here the tree worship that has been so widely traced. The Hellene had much of the child, too much also of the savage, in himself, together with a far stronger impulse than ours toward adequate self-utterance in beautiful and enduring forms. Perhaps the combination of traits was a necessary one. Even now, whenever an artist is reincarnated among our more phlegmatic folk, whether he be painter or poet, musician, or myriad-gifted genius like William Morris, we still expect him to show more than his share of impulsive energy, of excited nervous life, of enthusiastic love for all beauty in nature or art; to be, in fact, his life long a child; for he retains what the rest of us, at best, lose too soon with the fading glow of the morning.

At any rate the Greek people, as a whole, were more than any other an artistic race. It was a passion, a necessity, to them, to curve the outline even of pots and jars in the true forms of simple beauty. Their costume, for man or maid, could fall only in waves of grace. All their handiwork seems to have the familiar human touch; and hence, throughout the arts of design, the shapes they created have survived, and have become the general possession of every cultured people. Above all, the myths of the world, those that have originated far away in West or East, or are so obvious that every dawn and spring suggests them afresh, these universal human tales are handed on in Greek forms, touched by the golden finger of Hellenic grace. The strug-

gle of primeval man with the cruel forces of nature must now for evermore be attached to the names of Titan Prometheus and wide-wandering Heracles. Our own national eagle still clasps in his talons the thunderbolts of Zeus and Pallas. Almost every divinity of the Greek Pantheon is infinitely nearer and more real to us Germanic folk than our own Odin and Thor, Freya and Balder.

But perhaps the most genial forms of life that the Greeks have revealed to us are those lovely creatures, innocent of harm or guile, too seldom seen by wishful eyes, in the twilight shade of tangled thickets, by the haunted spring, or dale with poplar edged—the Nymphs. As a German scholar says: “While the Satyrs and Sileni, with their Koboldlike nature, represent the uncanny yet harmless drollery of woodland life, the nymphs embody its feminine side, the tenderness, the charm, the sympathy of nature.” Perhaps this belief is the greatest tribute to womanhood ever paid by a race which must be called, as a whole, most unchivalric. The contrast might have been sharpened by allusion to centaurs, cyclopes, and other monsters by no means harmless nor droll. Indeed the goat-footed satyr of Arcadian mountains is a malicious demon to-day, and never was well-behaved. Our present theme is the gentler wood creature only.

It is a curious fact that the word *Nymphè* was in Homer, and is still by the modern Greek, assigned no less freely to human beings, in the sense of bride, woman of marriageable age, either a maid or recently wedded. Whether it was first applied to mortal or divinity is not so easy to determine.

The complete merging of the Nymph by the Romans with their own *Lympha* or *Lumpha*, the water sprite, is apparently bad etymology, as usual. The Greek word more probably means the “budding” or “swelling” one, and is itself a swift sketch of the sudden change from slender girlhood to rounded womanly beauty. Nevertheless the fountain nymph is, to all appearances, the earliest conception: naturally, since in rustic life the springs and brooks are fully appreciated as the sources of all vegetable and animal exist-

ence. Even in Homer, to be sure, we hear often, also, of the mountain nymphs—Oreades—of nymphs in charge of groves, though not named as a genus, and even of special guardians for cavern or morass. But these groups explain themselves, since the very meadow brooks usually have their sources in the wooded hills, trickling from limestone grottoes, or gathering their rills from the tenacious spongy swamps. The flashing of white cascades through intervening trees, the graceful leaps by which the stream descends from rock to rock, or the ceaseless musical treble of its voice, may have inspired some prehistoric poet to identify it with a beloved mortal maid. But if at first a fancy, it became a most deep-rooted belief.

There is but a distant kinship, however, between these gentle Bestowers of Blessings and the creatures of the salt water that bear the same generic name of nymphs. In particular, the three thousand daughters of Oceanus, dwelling in and beside the remote earth-bounding stream of their sire, have but rare dealings with men, or even with the social gods on Olympus. Calypso, the most familiar and the most lovable of them all, says half-reproachfully to Hermes the messenger (“*Odyssey*,” V., vss. 87, 88):

“Lord of the golden wand, O Hermes, what is your errand?
Reverend, truly and dear: yet rare were your visits aforetime.”

And for his ungallant message—for he is sent to bid her release Odysseus and speed him homeward—the graceful herald makes the but half-courteous excuse that he has come quite against his own choice (*Ibid.*, vs. 100):

“Who would willingly traverse a water so bitter and boundless?”

The most notable appearance of the Ocean nymphs in extant poetry is as the chorus of Æschylus’ *Prometheus*, when the Titan has been chained to a cliff beside the desolate Northern sea. Their heroic devotion to the sufferer—with whom they are apparently overwhelmed and buried by Zeus in his wrath at the last—is partly explained by their close kinship, for they recall in a sympathizing chant how much happier a

song they had raised not long before for their sister Hesione as Prometheus' bride. Though fearless in womanly sympathy and sacrifice, they are in their own nature shy, modest, and full of humility. They even chide Prometheus for his rash audacity and violent speech, though they admire his courage and refuse to flee from his doom.

The great rivers also are imagined as the masculine children of Oceanus, or of the sky-father Zeus, many of them appearing in plastic art, usually as bearded recumbent figures, with such attributes as the horn of plenty and the urn. The representation of these river gods with bull's horns, or as bulls with human faces, emphasizes the masculinity in the conception. Since we are eager to trace each Hellenic belief to a Homeric beginning, it is interesting to note that the angry Scamander "roars like a bull" in wrath against Achilles, and that bulls are sacrificed to this and other rivers in the Iliad. Yet the Trojan river god is for Homer human in shape and fully divine of nature, even taking part in the Olympian council of the greater gods. Indeed as to one such Heavenly gathering we hear ("Iliad" XX., vss. 7-9):

"There was every river, except Oceanus, present,
All of the nymphs as well, who dwell in the beautiful woodland,
Or that inhabit the sources of rivers and grassy morasses."

Usually, however, the river gods and fountain nymphs are both strictly local in character and cult.

The Mediterranean, again, is the realm of Nereus' lovely offspring by the Oceanid Doris, a race so familiar, so tenacious of life, that in the folklore of modern Greece the name of "*Neraiides*" has come to include nearly the whole world of faerie. The leading spirit among the Homeric Nereids is the much-wooed Thetis, who, as the Mourning Mother of Achilles, is perhaps the most attractive character in the entire Iliad. Another Nereid is the reckless coquette Galatea, who leads her huge lover, Polyphemus the cyclops, a merry dance, and, as Ovid tells us, is so cruelly paid for it all at last. All Nereids are gentle, beautiful, and completely human in form, contrasting delightfully with the wide-lipped dolphins, scaly

sea-horses, and even wilder shapes on which they ride, as they go, for instance, carrying over sea to the impatient hero the magic armor forged by the smith god at Thetis' tearful request. It is no wonder if in this general association we meet occasionally, also, more malignant creatures like the fatal Sirens, or the heartless lady Circe who turns men into beasts. To the early Greeks, at least, the sea was full of mysteries and terrors. Scylla is perhaps the grimmest of them all.

But the true rustic nymphs of Hellenic lands, at least, are an altogether benignant race, every way helpful to man. In a few cases, at least in Asia, perhaps not in Hellas itself, they are said to have borne children to mortal lovers. They are, however, already in the Homeric world, as we have seen, distinctly superhuman, and indeed "daughters of supreme Zeus," though usually subordinated clearly to the Olympian deities. This inferior rank is graphically indicated when once the poet boldly compares a mortal princess to Apollo's sister ("Odyssey," VI., vss. 102 ff.):

"Even as Artemis passes, the huntress, over the mountains,
She who in chasing the boar or the fleet deer taketh her pastime,
With her the nymphs, the children of Zeus, who is lord of the ægis,
Woodland dwellers, are sporting—and Leto rejoices in the spirit—
Loftily over them all her head and brow she upraises,
All are beautiful there, yet she is easily foremost."

The filial relation of the innumerable nymphs, and in Homer of the river gods as well, to father Zeus is perhaps merely a reminiscence of conscious nature worship, a reference to the cloudy sky as the source of rain, and so of all streams. Hesiod gives the same idea in another form, when he makes the rivers sons of Oceanus. It confirms once more the impression that the Naiad, or fountain spirit, is the eldest of all the lovely sisterhood. Yet the nymphs are occasionally prayed to by the Homeric heroes, almost as if they were true divinities, able to bestow vital blessings on mortals if they will. Every one recalls the constant antithesis in Homer between men that abide for a day and gods whose life is eternal; and the nymphs of the epics are evidently not mortal.

The most direct evidence is Odysseus' words to Calypso as to his Ithacan wife:

"She is a mortal, indeed; thou, ageless and deathless forever."
(*"Odyssey,"* V., vs. 218.)

Here, as in so many other fields, the Homeric poems exercised a dominant but not a dogmatic power over the Hellenic imagination in later centuries. The faith in the nymphs may perhaps be compared to the widespread belief among ourselves in guardian angels, or in local miracle-working saints. There were philosophic minds in fifth or fourth century Athens, as there are to-day, who rested, fully satisfied, upon the sole supreme Intelligence that guides the universe. Even to this highest Power Anaxagoras, like Emerson, might be reluctant to assign such attributes as sex or location or limit of any sort. But for humbler, more timid souls, then as now, the intercession of the patron saint or local divinity close at hand was an absolute essential for all living devotion. Achilles himself makes his petition to his mother, which she takes in person to the supreme throne of Zeus. Through such powers of heavenly intercession even a monotheistic creed—which the early Aryans may well have held—might eventually take on the outward aspect, and at last the confused reality, of Polytheism. To the sympathetic heart of a poet, again, the traditional faith might make effective appeal, while his intellect, less aggressive, uttered only a whispered denial. In Sophocles, for instance, we find rather an artistic interpretation of his people's beliefs than the consuming, prophetic fire of conviction that glows in Æschylus.

There is always some danger of reading our own feelings into the pages whereon earlier men have left fragmentary record of their heart-beats. But here we cannot go far astray in likening the dreams of Plato, at least, to modern Pantheism, that teaches how

"Life in all its forms is one,
And that its secret conduits run
From the great fountain head divine,
Through man and beast, through grain and grass."

Those readers who care least for the endless quibbling of the Socratic circle over philosophic definitions should still not fail to enjoy the fresh atmosphere and rural stage setting in that most kaleidoscopic of dialogues, the Platonic *Phædrus*. It may be worth mentioning that the shrine from whose close vicinity Socrates claims to draw his inspiration is common to nymphs and muses, if the artist is not indeed deliberately confusing or combining the two sisterhoods. It is, in fact, more than likely that the inspirers of song and music, the muses, could only have had their origin also in a land of streams. But the Platonic Socrates plays with names that represent physical reality to others, while to him they become the highest ideal inspiration from divine truth.

After Plato, at any rate, no later Greek, unless it be Theocritus, makes any large addition to the wealth of Hellenic myths; though the belief in nymphs and satyrs is not even now wholly dead in the Arcadian dales.

Now the closer this alien beauty seems to come to our human shape and mortal lot, so much the more natural grows the question: And is it also subject, like us, to age, decay, and death?

The original "*Iliad*," or "*Achilleid*," was an austere tragic picture of life. The brief and bitter day of the hero is in sharpest contrast to the immortality of the gods who make wretched puppets of their creatures. His own mother, a deathless sea nymph, once wooed by the lords of the universe, cannot save him. The existence of the ghost beyond death is a mere pallid shadow of the sweet life in the sunshine, and is no real consolation for its loss.

The later builders upon the great epic structure are, in a large sense, faithful to their master. Hector, in particular, is at least as pathetic a figure as his ruthless slayer. Andromache stands upon a narrow ridge of troublous wedded happiness, smiling through tears, remembering always the death of her parents and seven brethren amid the horrors of war, looking forward to fresh bereavement, enslavement, and dishonor. So it is, wherever we gaze. Such a picture must

draw a sharp line between human misery and divine security. Andromache speaks with wistful tenderness of her father's grave ("Iliad," VI., 419, 420):

"And the elms are growing about it,
Set by the Oreads, daughters of Zeus, who is lord of the ægis."

The Oreads in Homer are divine, as their father is. While man's shadow passes and vanishes, the eternal hills abide, the forests stand, the streams run steadily on. So it is with these happy guardian spirits of the mountain and the wood, of cavern, spring, or river.

Between "Iliad" and "Odyssey" there is no violent break; even the characters are largely the same. The sky, if not now always black with storm clouds, is gray rather than sunny azure. The fate of the short-sighted, youthful suitors themselves is full of pathos. We know that Odysseus and his helpful wife meet but to part, even in their lifetime, on the threshold of old age. The despairing grief of Thetis and the lonely sob of Calypso are, indeed, the voice of divine sympathy with man. Pallas Athene has grown tenderer and wiser since Troy fell; barbarous Ares, and yet more merciless Aphrodite, hardly appear at all. But man is still tragically isolated, life has little comfort, and death is the near and bitter end.

In both the Homeric poems proper, then, all superhuman beings are immortal. The Hamadryad, living and dying with the single tree whose life she embodies, is nowhere mentioned. Our first instinct is to assign the rise of belief in her and her kind to an age of still beautiful and gifted Decadence, when the full confidence in the existence of the great Olympians themselves was undermined with deadly doubt. We are inevitably reminded of the fancy so nobly uttered in the Miltonic "Hymn to the Nativity," that the advent of a larger faith overturns statue and shrine of the old gods, and from each familiar rustic haunt, at the Saviour's birth-hour,

"The parting genius is with sighing sent."

Yet this natural conclusion, though it has been defended by

learned scholars, must probably be abandoned. The name Hamadryad may be comparatively recent. The belief in the tree spirit, if not known to Homer, is doubtless many centuries older even than Greek epic. As has just been intimated, it is more likely that the fully conscious art of the supreme poets carefully excluded whatever would have blurred the large lines of contrast in their pictured universe.

It is even believed by many students that the great Olympian gods show in their cult traces of their own origin in an older tree-worship. According to this view, Zeus is a personified oak, Athene herself a creation from the olive, not the olive her gift to men; the laurel has become Apollo; the myrtle, Aphrodite. The latest and clearest case of such metamorphosis is Dionysos' origin from the vine, with which he is still often elaborately combined in plastic art. Such a legend as the tale of coy Daphne, wooed too impetuously by Apollo and transformed into the laurel to escape his embrace, must then be regarded as a later invention, to explain what was no longer understood aright—viz., the central place of the laurel tree in the Pythian cult. But no such theory as this can be firmly established from Greek sources alone; rather it is an extreme conclusion from the wide extent and primeval antiquity of tree worship almost the whole world over. That a tree should be personified, and especially endowed with a feminine nature, seems to us most natural, not to say inevitable. (Ovid is nowhere more graceful than when metamorphosing women into trees, as at the close of the Phaëthon episode.) But nothing like it is intimated in *Iliad* or *Odyssey*. The first full description of such natures is however in a poem dealing with a Trojan myth, and apparently composed under Phrygian influences.

Among the greater "Homeric Hymns" the least devotional in tone, least hymnlike, and perhaps in spirit least Homeric, describes the reluctant wedlock of Aphrodite, on Mt. Ida, with the mortal Anchises. The poem may be as early as the seventh century B.C., though opinions differ widely. It is made up, to an extraordinary degree, of bor-

rowed verses or half lines, chiefly from "Iliad" or "Odyssey." Aphrodite, leaving the shepherd's cabin and departing heavenward, warns him never to boast of having enjoyed a goddess' love. The child that shall be born—Æneas—says Aphrodite ("Homeric Hymns," iv., vss. 257ff.),

"Deep-bosomed mountain nymphs shall rear for me,
Who dwell upon the great and holy mount,
Who follow neither men nor deathless gods.
Long life is theirs, ambrosial food they eat,
And with immortals join the glorious dance.
Sileni, and the keen-eyed Argus-slayer,
Mate with them in the gloom of lovely grots.
When they were born, high-crested oaks or pines
Grew with them on the all-supporting earth,
Beautiful, vigorous. On lofty heights
Precipitous they stand. The gods' demesne
Men call it, and the ax molests them not.
But when the doom of death approaches them,
First on earth the stately trees decay,
Their bark is wasted, and their branches fall,
And the nymphs' soul as well as the sunlight leaves.
So they will keep with them and rear my child;
And they, when lovely manhood comes to him,
Shall hither lead, and show to thee thy son."

The passage has been rendered as literally as possible, even verse by verse. It is a baffling glimpse that is here afforded, and more questions are raised than answered. The account gives us the impression of being in the main borrowed from some other source: the herdsman Anchises should know the wood-nymph as well as Aphrodite herself does. The Greek text does not tell whether the soul (*Psychè*) of the Hamadryad passed to the underworld like a man's. Perhaps it was reincarnated in a tree; or, again, the word may mean no more than existence, individuality.

It will be noticed also that in the hymn no name is given to this class of nymphs. The word "Hamadryad" first occurs, apparently, in a fragment attributed by Plutarch to Pindar, who explains it: "Since she hath for her doom the limit of a treelike life." "Dryad," moreover, is not found till much later, perhaps first in the mock-archaic epic of

Apollonius Rhodius. The two creatures are sometimes confused; but Servius, the most learned of all Virgil's editors, ancient or modern, lays down the distinction which is generally observed: "Hamadryads are nymphs that are born and perish with their trees, but Dryads those that dwell among the trees"—that is, the Dryads continue the Homeric tradition of a divine nature, presiding over groves, and more fully distinguished than of old from the Naiads; the Hamadryad is but the soul of the single tree, possibly without any original claim to superhuman powers.

With the line of Pindar, Plutarch also quotes a longer fragment from Hesiod. While this poet, or rather the Hesiodic school of poetry, is regarded as second in antiquity to the Homeric epics, the feebler artistic creativeness and the conservative traditional tone make it often a better authority for the real prehistoric Hellenic belief. The statement is:

"The cawing crow outlives of youthful men
Nine generations, and four crows the deer.
After three deer the daw grows old. The palm
Outlasts nine daws: and we ten times the palm,
We daughters of great Zeus, the fair-tressed nymphs."

Only the Pindaric verse, cited just afterwards, suggests that a Hamadryad is speaking here. Did the gift of long life, or rather the doom of death at last, pass from her to her woodland sisters? Again, our tantalizing information raises a query to which no answer is forthcoming. A late Roman poet, indeed, adds to his version of these lines,

"We Hamadryad nymphs, who longest live;"

but he is no wiser in such lore than a Keats or a Schiller. The Hamadryad that Apollonius knew was not bound to her aged tree by any tie more vital than long-lasting affection. She fled when it was felled, and lived to be the evil genius of the ruthless youth who scorned her pleas, and of his children after him (*Argonautica*, II., 477-485.). The name is sometimes used for almost any nymph. Thus the fountain sprites that drag Hylas in, when the Argonauts send the beautiful boy to draw water, are called Dryads, and again

Hamadryads: this, indeed, by one of the most willful even among Roman singers, Propertius (Elegies, I., xx., 32-45).

Let none wonder that on such a subject the words of "the ancients" are contradictory or uncertain. What we call antiquity is but one throng after another of eager-eyed strip-lings, who clutch like ourselves at wealth or power, seek the fair blossom of happiness, and find at best the bitter root of knowledge. In their brief day, even briefer and more troublous than our own, scant time is theirs to ponder aright on the traditions of their past. With fast-blanching hair they utter to the winds their hopes and fears, their fondest fancies and darkest regrets, the few scrawl them on the driving leaves; and straightway they themselves are vanished again into the dark, while onward rolls the flood of years. Of those dry leaves a chance handful has drifted to our reach, with tatters of a thousand more. In our own day such a gift as the Bacchylides-roll arouses far-reaching hopes. But as yet the lyric dreamers of the dream are above all else lost voices. One or two, from Sappho's thousand songs, even those desperately ill-written, and torn from the life of the day out of which they sprang, are ours complete. So the merry founder of Attic drama has left not a word.

In so far as mythology is a science, German scholarship teaches us here as elsewhere the might of perfect organization. For sixteen years already scores of unwearied specialists have labored on the "Detailed Lexicon." The plan has grown steadily, until now every written statement, each inscribed stone or bronze, every vase painting, is cited, and order is evoked out of chaos, when possible. All gratitude to the toilers! If my paragraph on Calypso's sisters is too brief, it is because Roscher's fortieth Lieferung, just at hand, reaches but to "Odysseus," and Germans, unluckily, spell the children of Oceanus with a *k*.

There is, however, another class of interpreters for art and poetry and myth. Preller or Flaxman accompanies us as we read Homer with such a lamp as all Furtwängler's encyclopedic ingenuity can never light. Shelley's version

of the merry hymn to Hermes is better than faithful: his imagination bridges all gaps, and makes the diviner's choice among "various readings."

The nature of the gentle tree nymph is best known to us all through Walter Savage Landor and James Russell Lowell. Through them we are assured that the old hymnologist was a slanderer, if he meant that all Hamadryads were light-o'-loves for rough Sileni or for fickle Prince Hermes himself. One, indeed, we knew already—Chrysopeleia—who rewarded her preserver with wifely devotion, and was the mother of a happy human race.

The same meager and rather coarse ancient tradition has been freely recast and filled in by the two nineteenth century artists. There is more evidence in Landor's poem than in Lowell's of close familiarity with classical poets. The bleeding of the tree if the ax wounds it, the aversion of the nymph for gloomy old Echion, her rash, demonic vengeance when her lover seemed for once neglectful, the simple offerings of milk and honey to the injured divinity—these are all true Greek touches. The shrine of Cnidian Aphrodite, and the bright pilgrim trains faring thither, make a fitting background. The loss of happiness, and life itself, in early youth, not through sin but by the mere accidental misunderstanding of an instant, is more than tragic—even elegiac. Still the years of previous bliss, the father's pious resignation, the Hamadryad's full knowledge, though too late, of Rhæcus' faithfulness, and her merciless scorn of Acon, whom from his love something far less mighty than death could sever—all this draws the string of our grief and reconciles us to a perfect work of pagan art.

Lowell is a less mature and elaborate artist. Even his boldest classicism is needless and questionable; he might well have draped his nymph. But the chief differences—and they are very great—in his treatment of the myth stamp him once more as the Puritan. Indeed, though we as a rule begin, and rightly, "A youth named Rhæcus," this is preceded by a sermon thirty-five lines long, really an

apologia for the paganism of the story, which needs no defense. Probably Lowell felt, also, like a true Englishman, that "A man should, whatever happens, keep to his own caste, race, and breed." So the lovers must be parted before even the first kiss is exchanged. The blame for this, our chivalric poet at twenty-four naturally lays upon the man, while the nymph evidently knew, from the first, 'twere better they should part. Yet to forget, till an hour too late, the first tryst, to beat and bruise the humble messenger that would remind you, does not rouse, it seems, a wood nymph's deadly wrath! Here, it is to be feared, the reality of the Hamadryad had already faded from the poet's mind, leaving only the moral behind. That moral is beautifully phrased:

"We spirits only show to gentle eyes,
We ever ask an undivided love;
And he who scorns the least of nature's works
Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from all."

It is to be hoped that Rhæcus' subsequent lifelong loneliness on earth was sanctified to his good.

And yet, though Landor's artistic touch is perfect, and the young abolitionist never fully learned "the distinction 'twixt singing and preaching," I must confess to a half preference for the New Englander's poem, which no Greek would have understood or approved. Landor's most exquisite gems remain isolated, all but unknown; a model, or the despair, of artists in their finish and grace, yet exerting far less direct influence in the great world of men and women than the work of a rough-handed toiler like Gerald Massey, or a slender woman's cry like the song of Adelaide Proctor. We do not demand, nor whole-heartedly approve, in a nineteenth century poet the spirit of lost Hellas.

My chief present purpose is, however, to illustrate with sufficient copiousness the fact that, throughout the world of Hellenic and Hellenistic myth, from Homer to Landor, the cruder distortions of the human form, or perversions of our kindly human nature, are almost invariably masculine. Polyphemus is a bachelor, savagely in love with the little co-

quette Galatea. A feminine centaur is doubly rare; rather do the centaurs rashly attempt to carry off mortal women. A female satyr is altogether unheard of until the decadence of art; the satyr pursues the half-coy, half-willing, but altogether lovable, wood nymph. Even in that rudest realm of dread and mystery, the far-off seas, Circe and Scylla are the exceptions, while Calypso, Ino Leucothea, and their gentler kind, are an innumerable sisterhood. So in the great tragic scenes of the epics, Thetis with her motherly devotion, and Odyssean Pallas as the wanderer's mentor, are infinitely more real than the half-comic Aphrodite or Artemis facing men and gods upon the battlefield.

Nor are such conceptions to be all too hastily dismissed as merely part and parcel of a faith outworn. If the presiding genius of each local cult, the nymph of every grove, peak, or fountain, were adored as an independent divinity, then were the universe chaos indeed. But, not to emphasize unduly the rather clouded omniscience and oft-disputed overlordship of Zeus, we have frequent glimpses, in the poets as well as in the philosophers, of Fate, Destiny, inexorable Law, guiding even his lightnings from the darkness behind his throne. With such a general conception of Cosmos—and the word is older than Pythagoras—not merely the nymphs and local *dæmones* generally, but even the strong-willed children of the sky-father, like Apollo and Athene, may assume their place as powers helpful to man, and incapable of deep-rooted or lasting discord among themselves. Such a belief may have merely personified vividly the myriad forces of the universe, whose benignant and harmonious nature we ourselves rather believe than fully demonstrate.

But whether we see in Greek mythology a crude approach to monotheistic belief or a dreamy pantheism, or even something more like pandemonium, certainly this is true: that in Greek poetry and popular myth, as in Goethe, the eternal Feminine, whether dwelling beneath or above the clouds, is full of tenderest sympathy and love for struggling man.

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